

The urban hermit  
#17 two american  
dollars



***The Urban Hermitt Number 17*** is about Utah and Nevada and some other things. Fret not, this isn't a school report on what the state's flag looks like or what the major crop is. You know, I was just in the middle of the desert with these strange people and these strange towns and even the sky was strange so I sat down here in San Francisco and wrote about it over coffee. Yeah, I relocated to the bay, I mean, gay area. The rent is so expensive here that I can't even go out when I want, so writing is a great activity to do when you are broke. And don't tell me to move to Oakland, it's just as pricey. Maybe someday, I will get the hookup, live rent free, and have a pimp! But of course, everybody dreams of that just as everybody these days is a poet, swears they are into hip hop, and are working on "the novel." And another thing, a lotta people tell me that they wish each issue of my zine could just keep on going and not end where it ends, but it is a big pain in the ass to photocopy 100 page zines and it is a bigger pain trying to get free/cheap copies for 100 page zines. This issue of the urban hermitt is smaller than I wanted it to be. If I had the access, I would print 200 page zines each issue. So on that note, if you are rich and kinda dig my writing, you are more than welcome to print my zines or a book. And oh, one more thing, I am sorry my last issue was fiction. This one isn't fiction, at all.

So why don't you rawk on with yer bad self, eat some thai food, and fuck,  
the urban hermitt

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*\*Also, I am slow with my mail. And you should support small press like Microcosm and many more....And while you're at it, frickn' support queer hip hop, go to [www.gayhiphop.com](http://www.gayhiphop.com) and while I'm at it, thanks joe, zine tour kids, all my hommies, the queer hip hop revolution, the queers, the trannies, and all the people who bought me beers and let me crash on their couch along the way...*

## ***Table of What is All in This Here Rag:***

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**Part two:** utah, emo kids, and mormons.

**Part Three:** seattle, wingnuts, the conception.

**Part Four:** escaping colorado, greyhound, nazis, the desert.

## ***Rules for diggin' the urban hermitt fanzine:***

1. you must understand that slang is ok. And that people use slang all the time. You too.
2. you must know what the word "queer" means. I mean, really.
3. making fun of people is healthy therapy as long as you make fun of yourself too!

## **PART ONE: *I didn't come here to gamble...,***

Past the Sierra Nevada mountains, I say goodbye to the Bay Area: San Francisco of thy holy leather daddies, fat burritos in the mission, and other multi-cultural galore. Oakland of thy kick ass hip hop. Berkeley, of thy yee ol' anarchist winguts. Yep, there is nothing out here in the Sierra Nevada but alpine trees and gas stations. Perfect scenery conditions if you were to meditate alone on a mountain top and attempt to *find* yourself, but no so perfect scenery for my tiny pick up truck chugging up the mountain on the way to the dry desert state of Nevada. My truck digs America and places that solely consist of alpine trees and gas stations. She, my truck, likes getting her daily pump of gas and zooming the shit outta the gas on highways and interstates where she passes numerous amounts of RVs. The truck is like a whiney bratty kid with expensive tastes, you know how some kids will only eat a certain type of food or only want a particular type of toy? Ie: modern day products such as *blue ketchup* and *plastic toy cell phones and plastic toy hummers*. Well, the truck, she feeds of really expensive gas.

So the truck digs America and I am still trying to find the meaning in this place admist wars and imperialism and all that bad stuff some people in America do that makes the rest of us look like assholes but I am not an asshole, I am just a kid with a wide opened mouth who sure thinks the alpine trees are pretty but thinks the leather daddies, and graffiti has it's beauty as well. And I like to say a lot, especially when I am traveling, "what am I doing?" But I perfectly know what the hell I am doing: being absolutely ridiculous while I can. And chuggin' up this mountain, I am trying to be an unemployed artist, which is hella cliché, but who cares because an entire

book/zine distro weighs itself down in the back of the truck where there are two zinesters, James and Sam, who are in shaggy thrift store clothing. They fart a lot in the back of that truck so I am starting to worry that all my books and zines will smell like poop. In the front of the truck where my girlfriend of the moment, Syntax, and I sit, we do not fart, instead, we pick our nose.

Hello dry Nevada here we come! We are on a back to back tour where we are trying to say "hey! If underground bands can tour, then so can zinesters in shaggy thrift store clothing! So can jugglers! Sex workers and raw food wingnuts! We are going to pick our noses, fart tofu rank, down instant coffee, and read our photocopied works all thru this country!" And I will find some deeper meanings to a country that is all well too known for assholes even if that meaning is like Waffle House, or something...

Close to the city of Reno, the truck stops at a reststop. Being that I was biologically born with a cunt, I unenthusiastically use the "ladies restroom" mostly becuz I don't want no 300lb trucker beating me up once he sees that I pee sitting down. We are now out of the Queer Mecca, please pay attention yo!

So I do my thing: pee. Upon exiting the bathroom stall, an older soft butch looking woman on one of those sweatshirts with collars on them with knitted portraits of flowers or baby kittens, comes up to me. Her perfume smells like a combination of fake flowers and dead baby kittens.

"Excuse me, but this is the ladies bathroom!" she yells at me.

"Yes, yes I know." I say while rolling my eyes and talking in that way like I am 24 not 14 but yes I look like I boy but this world isn't ready for special boys like me, so here we are, *bitch*.

"Well little boy, you need to grow up and use the men's bathroom!" she meanly demands like she does things like kill baby kittens.

(for real, yo!)

"But..." I try to explain myself to her but then she stares up and down at my body shaking her head.

Back in the truck, I begin to have a mini-freak-out-session. "Shit," I tell the other tour mates "You guys can't fuck up my pronouns anymore, you have to call me HE or otherwise I'm dead!" Nobody says a word.

"No! I mean it you guys, where am I going to go pee?" Again, no words. And maybe there is nothing to say and it just plain out sucks that the world, still, isn't ready for boys like me. And it's about fucking time that boys like me have their say, write their books, flow their rap songs, travel this country, and be able to go pee. And I wish there was something that the tourmates could say, but..., there is something to say about driving into Reno. All the alpine trees go "bye-bye" while the high desert kicks in. Then, strip malls. Then, housing "communities" which are really just rows and rows of houses that look the same lying on freshly paved cul de sacs. <yawn america, fuckn' yawn>

Into the city, the cheezy-ness and creepy-ness starts to come into the wood-work. Mega huge liquor outlets! Steak houses. Hooters. Old motels decorated in neon pink/light sky blue color combinations that all have "weekly rates and HBO specials." Old casinos. Long hair mullet people smokin' their menthols on dead street corners. Reno, I can smell your white trash and crystal meth in the air. Hello Reno, my name is the urban hermitt, and I am here to learn about you because honestly, I don't know what the purpose of you is Reno. So I park my truck in your downtown with the zine people in

shaggy thrift store clothing. We are going to our show venue, "The Java Jungle."

Still behind the car wheel, I sit mumbling things like *it's absolutely ridiculous that I am in Reno, Nevada it's as if the point in being here is just to be ridiculous*. Today, I am wearing my bright blue hip hop-esque baseball cap, simply because I am feeling urban, cynical, and fresh. A drunk, hunchbacked elderly man comes up to the truck.

"Hey there sonny, are you old enough to drive that thing?" he says to me.

I simply nod my head at him. What else is there to say or do about this 'ish. ('ish=issue)

*Come on Hermitt! You could write this killer piece about how the world doesn't understand boys like you! And then you could get drunk and perform it at a slam poetry night!* my inner, unemployed artist speaks but I gatta ignore that bitch 'cuz out here in Nevada, I just gatta try to pee and breathe and do other important things like drink water.

"Well little boy, I sure hope you are old enough. Man, I must be getting old." The old drunk man says and then walks away down the street to the rest of his day.

"Oh shit! What the fuck!" I exclaim as the tourmates and I walk to the Java Jungle. The only thing anybody can really say is "well, he was really drunk." Well, I've been *really drunk* many times in my wee lil' life too, and I ain't about to assume shit about things like "age" "gender" and "sexuality" "class" "race" and "whether they have decent taste in music or not."

<yawn>

"Yawn" again when we arrive at the Java Jungle which turns out to be a coffeeshop that looks like a replica of Starbucks ie: No Flava. Kenny G *fake jazz* quietly plays while boring people drink expensive coffee drinks. And I just can't stop <yawning> and I don't want to be <yawning> like a cynical post-riot boy, but sometimes you just can't feel the love like why is it always so easier for me to feel the love when I am living in my privileged bubble but never anywhere else? You too?

"Ugh, have you looked at their advertisements?" my GOTM says. (GOTM stands for girlfriend of the moment, you know)

I look over at the advertisements. One of them says:

**"You go on a blind date:  
she has an adam's apple.  
Bad day?  
Good coffee!  
Java Jungle."**

Oh, I don't have a fuckn' clue what kind of people read my zine but that ad is sexist, transphobic, homophobic, and more. Perhaps it covers all the "phobics." And I don't know if people who read my zine knows what "transphobic" means, so I suggest going out there and researching about it if you don't know what I am talking about. I don't have time to explain what it all means, humble reader, because I have s story to tell.

<grrr> <yawn> <confusion>

Anyways, the manager of the Java Jungle comes up to talk to us. We are very angry at him already not because of merely the "everything phobic" advertisements, but also because our show is not advertised at the Java Jungle at all. There is not a single flier to be found.

"Hi you guys!" the manager says in a very fake voice.

"Uh, Hi" we all say. The manager looks very rockabilly: slick back pomade hair, rolled up sleeves, black dickies slacks, classic sailor tattoos, and fancy shoes. Since when are rockabillies fake?

"So, we have a show tonight, don't we?" the manager asks, in a tres-condescending voice.

"Um, yeah." We all say.

"Well, some of my friends work at casino hotels here and I am sure they could hook you up with a discount." He talks all smooth like being a manager at the Java Jungle now qualifies him as being a primo-buisnessman-pimp. Ummmm...,"

"Uh..." we all say. The problem here, however, is that not only are we poor but this is an underground "punk rock-esque" zine tour: we crash on couches, cold dirty floors, and in the tiny pick up truck. Just because you are an unemployed artist don't mean you got money for hotels, even discounted ones.

"Cuz my friends can give you a discount."

"Well," we say "we don't really have the money and we usually stay at people's places."

"Well" the rockabilly manager says back "I don't really know how anybody who you can give you a place to stay but you should really check out those hotel discounts."

We are now exiting the oppressive Java Jungle, onward to the dead streets of Reno. Sam, one of the fellow tourmates, knows of a "hip" vegetarian café. We all listen to Sam and hope that

the "hip" vegetarian café will enlighten us with some hope in yee ol' Reno.

At an ambiguous office building, there is a sketchy neon sign that is advertising the "hip" vegetarian café. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, after going thru a dead hallway resembling the office of an insurance company, there lies the café. We all order vegetarian treats while tattooed to the max punk rock people eat raw pie and drink fancy microbrew beers.

"So, what are you guys doing in Reno?" one of the café people asks.

We, the zine shaggy nose picking thrift store tour people try to explain the tour we are on, and the obvious oppression of the Java Jungle.

"Reno isn't soooo bad" one of them explains.

"Oh really, why?" cynically, I ask.

"Well, not only is the rent cheap in Reno, but you are right next to Lake Tahoe and all these other cool places. It's like if you're into snowboarding and water skiing, this is the place for you maaaan."

"Ok," I skeptically say "but isn't Reno, um, lacking, some, um...culture?"

"Well, if you're into snowboarding and cheap rent, Reno is cool cuz, dude, the rent in the Bay Area is so not worth it."

*Fuck, sometimes wonder if expensive rent in a big city really is worth it for leather daddies, hip hop, and multiculturality? You know?*

James asks the café people what they are about.

**“We’re really into raw foods.”**

After this, we all begin to eat raw strawberry-rhubarb pie. “Mmmmm, this is the best piece of pie I have ever had.” James said, chewing away with utmost glee on his drooling lips. The funny thing is that James is addicted to tofu and potatoes: meaning that his taste in food isn’t necessarily bland, but it is definitely not spicy. James could eat anything and say it is good based on this criteria: the food must be vegan and starchy.

After this funny realization, the Reno snowboarders begin to explain to us the benefits of a raw foods lifestyle.

“We are kind of like a raw food’s community” one of them says.

“Cool!” James says with pie stuffed in his mouth.

“Yeah, in fact we are having our weekly raw food’s potluck tonight.”

“Cool!” James says some more.

Of course the zine tour wasn’t invited and instead, the raw foodist snowboarders direct us to Reno’s only “hip” record shop.

On the walk to the “hip” record shop, a sea of long haired mullet’d people stand in the streets chainsmoking while tweaking their high on crystal meth eye sockets. On the motel balconies, mothers with bad bleach jobs take deep cigarette drags while their dirty kids (all in rat tails) jump and run around in greasy parking lots. In my head, I am thinking about the times that my friend Rekon says “Hermitt, I don’t believe in rat tails.”

*Life, World, Consciousness etc.. I am really trying to dig and love Reno, Nevada but I can smell the crystal meth in the air and I really don't care if you can gamble or that all you can eat steak dinner specials are \$11.99 because I really do miss the homo leather daddies.*

At the "hip" record shop, life becomes *culturally diverse* again. Smooth vinyl is everywhere. Fliers for punk bands and eccentric movie nights are posted on the wall. There is even a cute husky dog running around the shop like life is good again. The owner of the record shop is a fuzzy bitter man who chainsmokes handrolled cigarettes like they are therapy for him. And this is ok.

"Do you want to hear our Reno sob story?" James asks.

"Well, do you want to hear my fucking sob story?"

He doesn't give us time to answer the question.

"Lemme tell you about my sob story. See, I was living in Vermont and making a shitload of money working at this ski resort. And then I met this girl and we totally fell in love. So we end up getting engaged. I buy her a fucking Nissan Sentra. I buy her a fucking ring. And then, you'll never believe this...."

He stops and takes a long drag off his hand rolled cigarette and exhales the smoke like he is in so godamned much pain that even two pills of pure MDMA and a hot one night stand with Bjork wouldn't cure the pain.

"...She decided that she wanted to get intune with her roots, so she decided to move back to Nevada but since she was from La Vegas, she wanted to try fucking Reno but since I

was oh so fucking in love with her I moved to Reno with her. Six months later, she dumped me!"

"So why are you still in Reno?" I asked.

"Because I opened up this record store one month before she dumped me."

"Shiiiiit" the zine tour sighs. But the record owner wasn't done talking yet. "And you know, Reno still totally blows but this here record shop is the only fucking culture in Reno!"

"Yeah, so it's kinda like you're saving Reno." I say.

"Kind of."

It was at that point that nobody on the zine tour could bring themselves to tell the record store owner our sob story. Sure, we weren't huge fans of the Java Jungle or the crystal meth looming in Reno's high desert air. But at least we weren't stuck in Reno or chained to a building mortgage like this guy.

"We are so not performing at the Java Jungle!" my girlfriend of the moment demands.

And so the polluted sun sinks into the toxic Nevada land producing a magically beautiful sunset. *So pretty* my subconscious whispers to my conscious mind. Isn't it so funny and fucked up that pollution and toxic grime actually makes sunsets prettier?

Zine tour gets back into the tiny pick up truck and zooms onward to the Java Jungle to deliver the news. Also, we have decided to drive straight to Salt Lake City, Utah through the night since Reno and her motels, transphobia, and casinos aren't our friends. There are no couches for us to crash on, only a tiny truck to drive which in the end, is the sometimes

nature of a road trip. And isn't going on tour kind of like a glorified road trip. A road trip with another purpose besides aimlessly wandering through life.

At the Java Jungle, it was a bumpin' night! Not only were the suburban housewives and their annoying teenage daughters out on a *night in the city* sippin' vanilla late specials but so was the entire City of Reno Police Department. Well, zine tour for sure wasn't going to perform this evening since saying things like *heeeeelo, I am a stinky queer person who is going to read a zine made from stolen photocopies. My first reading will be about the anti-imperialist movement and butt-sex may not be a good thing in front of the cops.*

Mr. Smooth Rockabilly comes up to us. "Hi guys! Are you ready to perform!"

"Actually" girlfriend of the moment says "We can't read tonight because we don't feel comfortable with your homophobic and transphobic writing as queer people, plus, you didn't even advertise us coming!"

"Ok. Actually, I think a few people were excited about you performing." Mr. Rockabilly says while laying a *guilt trip* on us thru his freshly bleached teeth.

"Well, can we make a sign explaining why we can't perform?" James asks.

"Nooo, I think we will write a sign!"

"Well, um...we'd really like to write a sign so that we can personally apologize to the people that wanted to see us." James tries to explain.

"Noooo, I think that we will make a sign." Mr. Rockabilly demands.

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Passive Aggressiveness is in the air and somebody's gotta stop it! But no, the manager of the Java Jungle feeds off this neo-west coast energy.

"Well, if you guys still need a place to stay, my friends could still give you a discount on their motels."

"We are driving to Salt Lake City tonight." We tell him like we are proud to be absolutely ridiculous and spontaneous.

## **PART 2:*I didn't come here to pray***

Syntax is a complex being. She sits in the back of my pick up truck in a tiny corner smooshed by sleeping bags reading personal zines about relationships, riding bikes late at night, finding the meaning of life over diner coffee, and Fugazi records. These zines are stuffed inside Syntax's black bicycle messenger bag. Tons of pins and patches are on the bag just like all over Syntax's clothes which adds to her complexity 'cuz her pins and patches aren't about drunk punk bands or the "image" of anarchy. Her pins and patches are about late night bike writing and questioning make up. No, Syntax is not the optimony of "deep," but I do wonder what goes on in her head.

Right now at this moment in time, I am downing a Cherry Coke in a plastic bottle trying to stay awake zooming on the interstate just outside of *oh so fucking charming* Reno, Nevada. Syntax, who sits behind me, is busy having a nervous mini-breakdown frantically writing about her hometown-Salt Lake City-which is the next destination for the stinky zine tour.

If I were Syntax, I'd be freaking out too. It's hard to go back to your old home after you've grown and changed so much. Duh.

"I have a confession." Syntax tells me.

"Shoot!" I say, do dehydrated on the *oh so corporate* Cherry Coke.

"I used to go by the name Moonlight when I lived in Salt Lake City."

"Did you name yourself that?" I smugishly asked.

"No, my parents named me it."

"So like everybody in Salt Lake City is going to call you Moonlight?"

"Yep." After this, Syntax goes back to scribbling in her notebook about her Salt Lake City; a Salt Lake City that I will never know 'cuz Syntax will never know my Seattle. She could visit all my favorite diners and coffeeshops but never know the feelings I had with a queeny girl after 9/11 at that particular coffeeshop where we foolishly thought that the "terrorists" would blow up the Space Needle next even though the Space Needle is one of the most useless pieces of articherture ever!

And I will never really know that Salt Lake City of Syntax's greasy diners, cheap movie theaters, and ex-boyfriends. She keeps anxiously talking about these subject matters as I drive through Nevada. I have never been to Utah before except the airport of dozen times, so in secret, I am really excited to visit Utah!

Keep on talking Syntax and I will help drive the zine tour through the barren of Nevada! Girlfriend of the moment is catching up on her sleep while James and Sam fart tofu rank in the back of the truck. I look out the window to my sides a lot, trying to figure out this land. Semi's race on by. A McDonalds or a gas station will appear every 300 miles or so. But the one thing you'll see a lot out here are prisons. Blank desert will

keep on being blank desert, and then a prison will appear. Continue on with a few more miles of desert and then another prison will appear. Put this layout on repeat.

DO NOT PICK UP HITCHIKERS OR STOP YOUR CAR HERE all the highway signs say. Still, in the middle of the cold night, we'd pull the truck over and piss on the desert sage bushes. <yes, sage does exist in Nevada, no matter how much I shit talk this state.>

*Hello Nevada, is anybody out there?* I'd scream to a dead sky as my piss sprayed onto the dirt. I tried to scream some more but eventually I passed out as my girlfriend of the moment took over the wheel. And who knew what was going on in Syntax's head.

You know, oh magnificent reader, when I use the term "girlfriend of the moment" I am not trying to condescend this person at all. I am just trying to respect her privacy and I am just trying to process our relationship, k?

I am dreaming of girlfriend of the moment's sweet breath and how poetry sounds in Syntax's head and what are Sam and James doing in the back of the truck? I wish they were fags so that the fart smell in the back of the truck was the raw smell of buttsex but James is married to Syntax and Sam seems heterosexual and this is all incredibly cool, you know, it's just that we are approaching farther and farther away from San Francisco and it's fags. Oh, I do love fags and all those other queers too, I mean the non-asshole queers.

When I wake up from drool-sleep in the tiny car seat, I hear Syntax say "we just passed the salt flats" not that you could see the salt flats in the night, but I still wish I was awake just to make the moment more meaningful than my sleep-drool...

It's like 4AM or 5AM, and all I really know is that it's that one hour when it seems like everybody is asleep. After 3AM, the bar patrons/drunkards pass out or try to fuck. At 5AM, the yoga heads and *people who have hard core-early morning jobs* wake up. I once woke up from an acid trip at 5AM, so there are people out there like that too. And we can't forget the insomniacs and speed freaks as well!

So at this "special hour," the zine tour rolls on into downtown Salt Lake City. Through the backstairs of an apartment complex, we haul our sleeping bags to an artsy hardwood floor apartment. I pass out and begin to dream again, of the sex girlfriend of the moment and I could have if only we weren't on tour or this damned "on the road" cliché. Shit, I ain't "on the road," I am forever confused wandering + drooling. Yes, it's oh so hella true, I drool a lot. Everymorning, I wake up only to find drool puddles on my pillow, like the first morning I have ever had waking up to the rising above the snow capped mountains that circle around Salt Lake City. I couldn't believe just how pretty this Mormon-conservative city was. <and yeah, by the way, it's now tomorrow, I mean, time has now somehow morphed itself into tomorrow>

I walked out to the front porch to scope out the city 'scape but my eyes kept directing themselves to those mountains. At least the Mormons have good taste in sunrises and mountain viewing.

Raney, our host, informed us zine tour hommies that we had to see the Mormon Mecca before we experienced anything else. Syntax rolled her eyes all like *that's right girlfriend, hmmmm mmmmm, you's gotsa see da mormon mecca, yo!* Syntax couldn't talk that much while the rest of us were whining about our daily addictions:

James: ice tea and potatoes. This addiction was *hardcore* cuz he would only buy ice tea from places that would provide him with unlimited refills.

Sam: cup after cup of cheap coffee and a chance to be vocally cynical about the state of the world.

Syntax: cheap coffee and an opportunity to hide in the corner to write about a thing called *beautiful*.

Girlfriend of the moment: strong tea and a chance to check out the plantlife.

UrbanHermitt: Sure, he'll drink the cheap coffee only if he can use those old skool diner style dispensers that let you directly pour gargantuan amounts of nasty white sugar into the coffee. After that, email because email is the ultimate addiction in these 2000-something times.

Needless to say, en route to the Mormon Mecca, our blood was needing caffeine like how Keith Richards needs a cigarette and like how Bruce Willis needs to be in at least five action movies a year about how he saves the planet.

The clean streets were empty as we approached the International Mormon Mecca HQ: a phallic office tower aiming itself towards the sky. Underneath the tower was some structure that was supposed to represent the globe like shape of planet earth. However, the concrete globe looked like a big juicy breasts or some juicy balis aka: the nut sack. Hmmmm. Am I supposed to suck Mormonism's cock? Surely, I do not want to suck the withering *you only wish you were on Viagra* cocks of the bald white old time men in matching black suits marching in and out of the phallic building.

"Whoa, if that's not the most *uber* phallic building ever!" I synly comment.

"Huh huh huh huh." Syntax rolls back.

The official entrance to The Mormon Mecca was right next to a creepy looking church that looked like it was designed by Dr. Suess on a bad drug trip fueled by a mix of special K and speedballs. During Dr. Suess's ultra-bad drug trip, he hallucinates that the grinch who stole Christmas would relocate to Salt Lake City to make sure that the Mormon's churches would look like not only straight outta the black plague middle ages, but also look like pointy ice crystals.

Or in other words, the churches were oh so pretty but at the same time weren't oh so pretty.

Hovering below the scary looking church is a lady in feathered hair and a trenchcoat, "Welcome" she says. The grumbly-caffiene-deprived zinesters say nothing back for the welcome lady is holding Mormon propaganda pamphlets in her hands. She is also wearing one of those modern day ID tags with barcodes and a fuzzy computerized photo of you on them.

In all due actuality, the Mormon Mecca looks more like a business center than a religious complex. There are neat little walkways adorned by manicured lawns and flower arrangements. And of course, all the Mormons wore the trenchcoats and modern day ID cards. Ok, what is it with trenchcoats and the religious fanatics and why are the only other people who wear trenchcoats are "The Goths" and "The Businesspeople." I can't really think of a theory to explain this.

But back to my <yawn america, yawn> theme 'cuz the Mormon Mecca is interesting but it sure as hell doesn't gimme an orgasm, that kind of orgasm that can only be achieved thru caffeine, sex, or breathtaking sunsets.

So close to *right now* the zinesters and I are attempting to leave the Mormon Mecca. Approaching the exit, you could hear choir voices humming songs about heaven but were the songs really about heaven or were they about phallic buildings, trenchcoats, polygamous marriage roots, and more? Well, as I pondered this, we passed the "Mormon family history library" where you could find out about every fucking person in your family/bloodline.

"Wow, that's actually kinda cool." I said to the shaggy zinesters.

"Nooooo, it's not Hermitt!" Syntax forewarned "Becuz after you find out about your family history, the Mormons will then iniate everybody in your family into the Mormon church."

"Nooo, they can't do that," I said "Like don't you need somebody's consent to fucking baptize you into their church?"

"Well the Mormons think they can!" Raney added on. Conversation is now done as we are finally leaving the Mormon Mecca. A "Trenchcoat Prophet" says goodbye, but we don't say a thing back 'cuz the phrase *I will convert you* is seething thru her hungry lips.

You know, it's been a long time since I mentioned Caffeine and us zine people have spent way too long under the confines of The Mormon Mecca, Thank Gawd Dee's Diner is across the street.

Dee's Diner, according to Syntax, is like Utah's local version of a Denny's. "I've spent so many hours here drinking way too many refills of cheap coffee, eating fries, hanging out, and writing," she says. I feel her. You feel here. Outside of Seattle in the dreaded suburbia, you could find me at the Dennys with my goth-buttrock friends sipping nasty Folger's coffee and

trying to figure out why we hated life so much yet loved life so much. I still, to this day, haven't got it figured out. Do you?

At Dee's, I do not even begin to understand the meaning of life, I just want to learn more about these Mormons, and I would really dig a cup of coffee please.

Our waitress is very old and bitter. She looks like she could use about twenty more cigarette breaks during her shift. Nevertheless, she pours the coffee. We all smile. Then, we all take a sip of the coffee and go "uggggh!"

"Syntax, now I've drank my share of cheap coffee but this shit is nasty!" proudly, I declare.]

"Yeah, but this is what makes Dee's, Dee's!" she says with the utmost look of nostalgia in her eyes.

Since I cannot consume this level of coffee, I look around the restaurant. You can spot out all the Mormons because they are wearing the modern day ID cards. The thing is that the Mormons don't look any different than anybody else aside from the ID cards. Just like you cannot tell, for say, who is really homosexual, unless they are wearing a tee-shirt that says *look ma! I'm gay!*

When the food arrives, I notice that not only is there a tiny dish containing ketchup, there is also a tiny dish holding a pink like substance.

"Oh Hermitt, that's ketchup-mayonnaise." Raney says.

"Ok, but why is it here and why does such a thing exist?"

"The Mormons love it, yo! They eat it with every meal."

"Why?" I am now really confused.

"I don't know but I do know that the Mormons have to eat meat with every meal."

"Why?" I am now really really, like hella really confused.

"'Cuz duh Hermitt, it's the Mormons." Raney says like I should have been born, baptized, and booty fucked with this knowledge.

"You better explain yourself!" I demanded.

"Well, um, it's the Mormons. They're just really bizarre."

"Tell me about it! I want to know!" I asked like a hungry beast.

"Like did you know that they all wear these one piece underwear suits that cover the entire body?"

"Yeah, and..." Syntax jumps in "don't they own Pepsi or Coca-Cola. It's one of them."

*Now, who knows if any of this is true or not but I do not have a real live hard core Mormon in front of me, so I might as well gossip over shitty coffee.*

"And the funny thing is," Raney says "Mormons don't even drink caffeine!"

Mormons in Trenchcoats=The Buisnesspeople in Trenchcoats?

I take a taste of the ketchup-mayonnaise, and like Dee's coffee, it's at a high taste of nasty. It's not like this whole situation is extremely bizarre for me, it's that it's so subtly and slyly bizarre that it makes the whole thing creepy.

Creepyness, I reject you! No way in hell will I let you program my brain!

We leave Dee's Diner and head onto the empty streets of downtown Salt Lake City, Utah USA. A light rail carrying all of two people zooms by on the barren streets. So, it's needless to say that this city is a ghosttown. What does a cynical confused as fuck urban hermitt do in a ghosttown? Nap.

And when I wake up from my nap, I am now back in the truck en route to our show. Another day, Another show. This show was at the library and the library was in a strip mall. Syntax began to get all nostalgic again, saying things like *a really cool coffeeshop used to be here but, sigh, it's now a strip mall....and a really cool comic shop used to be here but now, double sigh, it is a strip mall.*

And so, we read our zines and books; poured our frickn' hearts out to a six person audience in the back of the library. We ate free cookies. I got accosted by a heilia nervous baby punk dyke. And then...the holy majik happened! The two people who put the reading on worked for The Salt Lake City Public Library System. I found this out after they wrote me a fat check for my zines.

"Oh no, no..please don't spend all your money on my zines." I told them.

"Ha!" they said back "it's not our money we're spending, the city pays us to run a zine library!"

"You mean, that's your job?"

"Yes!"

My poor ass took that check guilt free for you and me! Now, some bitter-in that-non romantical-way people might be all like *fuck the government and anybody who takes money from the government is evil*. Fuck those people. I may not agree with everything the government does, but if the city of Seattle said *urban hermitt, we will pay you 30K a year to run the zine library within our public library system* I wouldn't complain.

With our zine cash, the went door next to the corporate health food store. Keeping the health food store spirit alive, um..., Syntax and her friend bought some beer. And this is where I made another important discovery (and maybe you already knew this dear reader) due to **Mormonhood, the alcohol content in beverages is lower in the State of Utah.**

"Are you gonna drink beer with us?" they asked.

As an avid beer lover, it was hard to say "NO" but "NO" it was 'cuz I also drink beer for the buzz. What's the point in drinking four beers, feeling full and tired, but feeling nothing else. Hell, I don't even drink soda pop for the taste, I drink it for the sugar and caffeine. You too? I thought so.

I go back to the crash pad and like a good urban hermitt, I crashed into the comfy arms of girlfriend of the moment. Love is sweet while it lasts, but it never lasts, so let's have another beer, outside of Utah, and dream...

....and when I woke up from my dream, it was time to jump in the truck again, and zoom on to another city.

Driving through Utah exemplified bizarre landscapism. Spawns of small towns popped up everywhere with a pointy Mormon church in the center. Up in the skies, above the small towns, tons of airplane jets were emitting some strange line of *what is that?* into the sky. Were the planes from military bases that were simply doing practice runs? Or were they not so

slyly putting mind warping toxins into the sky? The conspiracy theories are endless, yo! Perhaps the toxins were making the Utah-ians eat ketchup-mayonnaise, drink shitty coffee, and obey the Mormon law?

Middle of nowhere Utah was so spacious and the more south we went, the more smooth adobe-red rock mountains formed themselves into the sky admist the hick-iod gas stations and big rig truckers rammin' the highways. I envisioned "save the planet" raves and deep meaning drug trips with soul friends and beautiful photo shoots out here in this spacious-near desert land. While closing my eyes dreaming of candy colored jumpsuits for the fictional Utah raves in my head, I wore my plaid shirt rounding itself around my potbelly as I pumped gas into the truck while truckers gave me the *dude* nod but in that *I think you are a little dude* way. In a lotta ways, I am a little dude: a little riot boy hooked on cool phonics taught by sexy riot grrrls. Being a freshly new out transman is like being a young kid, cuz you have a lot of growing up to do. Well I do, I have to get this "using the bathroom" shit in line and I have to inject hormones into my ass while my voice cracks and I wait for the beard that will someday grow in. Hell, I am a bonafied 15 year old boy writing this story like no other 15 year old boy. Get it?

When we entered the Nevada state lines again, we were immediately bombarded by fake palm trees and mega-casinos. It's so funny how Nevada borders Utah but is like "The Purgatory" in comparison to the Mormoniac Utah Land. Of course, let it be said, that not only do fake palm trees suck, but they are one of the core underlining reasons why the world is sinking and sinking into humans self-absorbed shit.

Oh yeah, why are we in Nevada again? What's a tour without going to Las Vegas? Huh? So we drive into the city in the insane heat to our show space: a record store which happens to be in a strip mall. Don't worry though, the tattoo shop next

door is in the strip mall as well! This is because the entire City of Las Vegas is a strip mall if it's not busy being a casino or hotel. Las Vegas's landscape is the predicament for the world's doomed future: one day, so it seems, the who world will be one big strip mall. Maybe mohawked aliens will take over the planet soon and stop this insane mess. Or maybe all the dead Native Americans will rise outta their spirit graves and take back the land. Or maybe in my dreams...

For hunger, before the show, the zine tour roams through the strip malls in search of "vegetarian" food. You'd think in a shitload in strip malls, there would be at least one corporate health food store, no? No! We settle for "SouperSalad" which is one of those way-american buffet restaurants 'cept this one is soup and salad. Like iceberg lettuce and the same type of chili they serve at fast food restaurants, you know? This naturally pleases James who orgasms delightness over the all you can drink ice tea. But shit, that's enough iceberg lettuce and macaroni salad for me.

Back at the record store, the show must go on... Herds of punk indie rockers pack the store for a quick second. I get really excited until I realize that they are here for the bands. Boo-hoo, let's bust out The Cure, nobody understands me etc...

Sam and I stand outside the record store drinking coffee and brooding. It was nothing new for the day to day life of an unemployed artist. Little did Sam and I know that we were about to get accosted by wingnuts.

Who were these Las Vegas wingnuts hanging outside the neverending strip malls? The pseudo crusty punks slammin' cheap brew in the freshly tared parking lots? Meth heads cruising in their Ford Expeditions trying to sell us all dope? Crackheads at the neighboring mini mart? None of the above, yo. True wingnuts don't always fit the wingut stereotype.

Wingnut #1 works next door at the tattoo shop. He is covered in a vast selection of "tribal tattoos" and immediately accosts my sorry ass with stories about how Burningman saved his life 'cuz he found "god" under the lucid blue skies of another acid trip. But that doesn't make him a wingnut, now does it? But then he starts talking about his trailer. He paid good money for that trailer. He also lives in the trailer which is parked behind the very strip mall we are standing in. In fact, there is a whole trailer community that parks itself behind all of them Las Vegas strip malls. This shall be filed under "wingnut in that socio-anthropological way."

....which isn't amusing as Wingnut #2 who's busy being a drunk. He tries to take out a cigarette from his pack, but drunkishly drops it on the ground and then says to me "that one is for you baby!"

"what...the...fuck?" sez I under a thick rank film of coffee breath.

"that cigarette is just for you baby!"

"I don't want your fucking cigarette and why are you fucking calling me baby?" I growl back.

Wingnut #2 then gets in my face and says "'cuz you're cute baby!"

Now please note that not only I am a transsexual boy, I look like a boy. Being that this is the case, and 'cuz I am not a fabulous faggot, meaning I never get hit on by men. So my snotty mouth says "are you a fag?" to thee wingnut numero two.

"No, but you're cute!"

"But I am a boy, so don't you think you'd be a fag or like 5% fag if you were hitting on me?"

"Uh, well, oh...um, but I am not a fag." Wingnut #2 is now hella uncomfortable. Heh. Heh. However, he is not going away. Instead, he takes out a CD from his jacket. I look at the cover and it says "Folk Song Covers of Old Union Worker Revolutionary Songs."

"You want this CD, dooont you!" Wingnut 2 demands.

"No, not really."

"Ok. Ok. Ok. But I'll give this to you free, then do you want it?"

"Sure, if it's free then I will take it, why not?"

"Well then, you can't have it!"

"Ok, I won't take it."

"You won't take it even if it's free!"

"Yo dude, I said I would take it if it was free."

"Well then you can't have it but you sure are cute!" Wingnut #2 leans in to kiss me. I push him away and walk inside to pack up my shit and leave.

## **PART 3: This is where the fantasy was conceived...**

I lied to you. I first became obsessed with Nevada and Utah back in Seattle when I lived in an old rubber stamp factory in a brick building where tons of artists weren't supposed to be living in but we did anyway because that's how it always is: you aren't supposed to be living there or your dog isn't supposed to be living there or you can't smoke pot in the dorms or you bring veggie burgers with eggs in them to a vegan house. The Nevada obsession came first and Utah came later on.

Jem Bernstein was raised in Reno, Nevada at some point in the 1980's, and so was her twin, Belle. Then Jem moved around the country a lot living out her "crazy" artist life in places like San Francisco and New York City but now Jem was rooted in the old rubber stamp factory with 3 dramatic sometimes dykes and a cynical tranny boy named the urban hermit.

I couldn't tell if Jem was officially crazy or did too many drugs or was trying to play off the "image" of being "crazy."

Jem's drug habits were comparable to most other confused people in their 20's in the metro Seattle area: at least two cups of coffee a day, blue packs of American Spirit smokes, lotsa toast, and beer. Oh yeah, water was drank and sometimes stirfry but mostly pizza. And I think I am one of those people too. Jem and I had more-health obsessed girlfriends who provided us with vegetables. I wasn't all too crazy living in the rubber stamp building and I probably wouldn't have been crazy even if I wasn't sometimes supplied with vegetables. So there had to be another reason why Jem was playing this crazy game.

Daily, I would look deeply into Jem's eyes and try to play bonafied secret mind tricks but all that I could ever get out of her was: *I am working soooo hard on this art show, I hope people come, I need to finish a painting, will you help me set up some pieces etc....* But all that Jem could get outta me (I suspected she was playing the same bonafied secret mind tricks on me too) was: *I am attempting to scam way too many photocopies, I hope people like my new issue, I need to finish this issue, will you help me fold zines etc....*

Weekly, I would get Jem drunk, in attempt to figure out the "crazy." And all that I would get out of her was: *yeah, this one ex-girlfriend of mine was crazy, and yeah I need to go to toys in babeland, and I have been having really good sex latley etc...* But Jem, in turn, somehow got me drunk as well and all that she could get outta me was: *yeah, I am still really obsessed with this ex-girlfriend, and I am sooo horry, and it's hard having sex in an open loft when you live with dramatic sometimes dykes.*

I sniffed Jem's paint fumes. I listened to her sad sappy music. I attempted to analyze her paintings. No crazy was to be found, until one evening we were sitting on the couch staring out the window watching the buses stroll buy and the crazy bums scream to the sky and the drunk fratboys horribly try to

convince their girlfriends that they could drive. This is when Jem said to me "Hermitt, it's about time I tell you where I come from." And at that, Jem began to explain that she felt sooo crazy in the world and it was all because of Reno, Nevada. There was nothing left to say about this, this is just the way it was. And this is where the Utah obsession kicked in, when I asked Jem about her sister, and was her sister crazy.

"My sister is an ultra conservative Mormon."

"No way, you're twin, but you're soooo,"

"She is married and has 3 kids with a third one on the way."

"But Jem you're so queer and you paint and your hair is choppy and blue and...."

"She lives in southern Idaho and is a housewife."

"Tragic."

"You don't even need to say this to me Hermitt, I know."

"I want to learn about these Mormons, like why they have so many kids and why your sister is a Mormon!" I proclaimed to Jem but Jem just simply shook her head and took another sip of \$1.99 Trader Joe's wine. I dreamed of Utah and visiting the Mormon Mecca. And that was that.

## **PART 4:*I didn't come here to stay...***

"Don't ask, Don't tell" is not only a homophobic phrase devised to keep queers outta the armed forces. I also use this phrase when people ask "Hermitt, why in the hell did you move to Colorado?" And what do I tell 'em? Don't Ask. Don't Tell. And as a real life hip hop fly girl once told me: Don't Even.

All that really matters is that it's 100 degrees as I barely make it through downtown Denver, Colorado carrying my travel pack. What I am doing right now is like an exodus or migration. Each step I take is a step closer to my destination: San Francisco. Before I get to San Fran, though, I have to reach the Greyhound Station. I'm not escaping a dictatorship or abusive father. I am escaping homophobic hippies who don't think they are homophobic (this is the worst kind) and the religious right. Colorado is packed full with these two genres. I swear, due to the world's ignorance, I am being forced to migrate to the home of Leather Daddies. But it's not like I am pissed off about this.

At the Greyhound Station ticket line, two "don't even" straight black woman queens are bitching about the long line. Everybody is speaking in Espanol. Ok, Denver has got it's

cultural diversity. Denver is not so bad. But I lived in Boulder, which is, shall we say, quasi-diverse? But come one! Denver or San Francisco? My horny ass is like *West Coast here I come!* Or *Fresh Coast* as the hip hoppers say it.

A young boy in blond shaggy beard comes up to me and says "hey, how ya doing, maaan?" Upon the use of the word "man," I notice this kid's eyes are spacey in that hippie way.

"I'm alright." I say back in standard conversation tongue.

"Yeah man, I've been out here going to Phish shows," predictably, he says "so were are you from maaaan?"

"Oh, I've been in Boulder, but I am on my way to San Fran."

"Yeah, I heard that Boulder is really cool maaaaan!"

"Uh, relatively" I say, immediately flashbacking to all the store clerks in Boulder who wouldn't take my credit card 'cuz they thought it was my moms or dads. And I thought back to all the hippies who told me *not to worry* when I hummed blues like **it's hard being a radical transsexual in fucking Boulder or Denver for that matter.**

"Yeah, isn't Boulder like a liberal haven?" hippie boy asks me.

"Uh, it depends how you see it." I say with all due bitterness. He then leaves. Thank Gawd. I'm just tired, pissed off, and trying to get on with my life here.

When I buy my ticket, I am not asked for my ID. Now, I am fine with this but isn't America all like uber post 9/11 security obsessed paranoid? I could be a wingnut with bombs for all they know.

Even as I board the bus, I am not searched or asked for my ID. Ok, whatever. So I get on the bus and immediately press <PLAY> on my walkman because no wingnut is going to talk to me during my migration to San Francisco. You know those trips you go on that are all about taking your life back. You aren't about "the experience of traveling" where it's good to talk to wingnuts, you're about self-absorption.

Leaving Denver, I say goodbye to the old brick buildings and the people in them. I flick off some churches and I flick off Boulder off in the distance. A sign says "110 degree." Yes! I am outta here. I swing my attention over to a young riot grrrl across from me. She's reading a tattoo magazine and shaking her head to the music on her re-taped together headphones. I fantasize that young riot grrrl and I are gonna make out next time the bus stops. Shortly after jacking off in my head, I proceed to pass out through almost all of Southern Wyoming. She gets off somewhere during that duration of time. When the Greyhound parks itself outside of a McDonalds, I wake up. "We are at your 30 minute meal break" the driver says through a fuzzy-mutated microphone. All the drone-passengers glee with excitement and run into the McDonalds. I'd rather live off cheap coffee and cigarettes then eat this crap. In the corner, I spot out a hipster in all black chainsmoking Parliaments. I kept eye-ing him like we should talk or bond, but he doesn't respond as if he is at a higher level of hipster. Or maybe he could third eye sense that I was going to ask this question: why do most hipsters I know smoke Parliaments?

Fuck those kind of hipsters. I run across the hugest parking lot as fast as I can to a Subway standing in the lone corner of a strip mall. I order bread with vegetables and run back through the enormous parking lot back to the Greyhound bus in time before it ditches me. Back on the bus, it smells like a fast food restaurant. It's like fine G-Hound, only stop at McDonalds but can't you ban the food from entering the bus? But of course, the bus stops two more times at McDonalds before arriving in

Salt Lake City, Utah. Inside my guts, I am excited to be traveling through this state again, this place fascinates me. Mormons fascinate me.

Well ok, I am fascinated until we reach the Greyhound Station. This ain't no pretty building since it looks like it was made during the year of ugly building designing: 1974. The inside, with it's extreme neon lighting, is even uglier. Crystal meth breeds in the dry air. No Mormons in sight. It seems that nowadays, the Mormons prefer air travel as opposed to the G-Hound. I don't blame them. I shoulda flew.

I sit down next to a group of Arabic people. Of what country or descent they are from, I am unsure. But all of them are either midgets or deaf. A man wearing a huge Jesus cross is trying to write them out medical prescriptions. They all look scared and I am wondering why they are midget or deaf. And what in the hell are they doing in Salt Lake City? What the hell am I doing here? Oh yeah, maybe they are migrating too!

When it's time to board the bus, a short leprechaun looking man runs up and shouts "we're gonna have to do a security on this one!" Hmm. Now as we recall earlier, Hermitt, a punk ass kid who looks like he's a 12 year old runaway does not only get searched but does not get asked for ID at the Denver Greyhound Station. Now, at this current moment in time at the Salt Lake City G-Hound station, all the other buses are not getting searched.

First in line <surprise, surprise> are the deaf/midget Arabic people. All their suitcases are 100% getting interrogated,. All that seems to come out of the alleged suitcases is Tupperware containers full of pita bread. I can't even bare to look at the obvious racism/stupidity any longer, so I jump to the back of the line.

While in the back of the line, I begin to notice a couple of mean looking skinheads covered in tattoos. Hmm. Upon looking in detail at their tattoos (mostly 'cuz I am a tattoo fan) it is readily apparent, the nazi propaganda inked into their flesh. Swastikas are scattered across their arms. On one fellow's hands is the S.S. symbol. Ok, deaf/midget Arab people and nazi skinheads are not a good thing to stick on a crowded bus together. Also, is there a transsexual in the house? Oh, that's me. Heh. Heh.

Immediately, I jump into paranoia mode. Should I get on the bus or not? Fuck, like I really feel comfortable riding a bus in the middle of nowhere with nazi skinheads. Seriously, I am about to not get on the bus, but the prospect of chillin' at the nasty ass G-Hound station at 3AM wasn't a soul-soother either. I turn to some people standing in the line next to me and say "shit, that's so racist they're searching the bus and there's nazi skinheads in this line!"

"Oh." Is all that they can say back.

Boo-Hoo. Let's bust out the Joy Division. I feel so alone, etc...

When it is my turn to get searched, the security guy winks at me and says "you got nothing in your pack, do you buddy?"

"I guess not." I say. And at that, he lets me go without searching me. This white privilege shit can be really disgusting.

Once on the bus, the driver gets on. He has a tres sloppy pomadore, is sweating like he too is on the crystal meth, and weighs in 400lbs in that unhealthy way. "Excuse me ladies and gentlemen" he says completely out of breath "my name is Will, cough...cough, and I will be your driver but you WILL call me DRIVER. Ummmmph. Cough...cough. Ugh. When I

am driving, do not come and talk to me! And no smoking in the bathroom! Cough...cough. Now, we will be waiting on this bus for two hours and then we will leave!"

After he says this, he proceeds to yell at the deaf/midget Arabic people quite loudly and then leaves the bus. "What the fuck?" almost everybody says at once.

"Was he serious?"

"Nooo, he didn't"

"For real?"

"He's gatta be lying!"

But the driver wasn't lying. We all get off the bus to investigate. The station was now closed. Doors locked. We walk past the security office only to find the driver, our driver, passed out and drooling. There is nothing left to do now but chainsmoke. A bunch of people light up cigars. "Shit motherfucker, I wish this here cigar was a blunt, shit. I can't wait to get back home to Stockton, California and smoke me some real blunts!" somebody says.

"Pssst." I whisper to the smokers "did you know there's nazi skinheads on our bus?"

"Whatever man" was their response but what was leaving me really confused is that all the smokers were African American. Hmmmm. Why would most people feel comfortable riding a bus with blatant nazi skinheads is beyond me. I turn my head over to the nazis. They are chainsmoking their Marlboros and talking to a teenage buttrock boy with bad facial hair in this way that the buttrock boy is now getting initiated into their "club." Back on the bus, the buttrock boy asks me at what stop I am getting off at."

“Oakland, California.” Proudly, I say.

“Oh, I hate Oakland, I mean I fucking hate it and I hate San Francisco too.” He viciously says like the nazis have gotten to them.

“Oh really, where do you live?” I ask with clenched teeth.

“Stockton and I love it there!”

“You’re serious!!!? You like Stockton better than Oakland or San Fran?”

“Yes!”

Ok, now I decide to go back to that *living for me* thing and put the headphones back on! I hide my head in my sweatshirt and cry me a river all the way through the high, dull Nevada desert. In truth, I am not crying because of the Greyhound. Greyhound, she doesn’t deserve my tears. I am crying because my heart got left and broken in Boulder, Colorado. I didn’t forget to mention this at the beginning of the story, I just don’t know what else to really say about it. Should I write a really bad love poem and expect you, rad reader, to actually like it? Shit, there is no other way to say “cry, cry, cry.” Plus, the urban hermitt is sick of writing about the girls who break his heart and I bet those girls are sick of him writing about them. Instead, I listen to “Braid,” the best emo-boy band ever! Their awe inspiring song “boys who give hugs” is a true testimony to their emo-ness. Yeah, take that girl and Greyhound. I give my tears to the music. And then someday, when I am 50, I’ll write about you again with wise perspective and then my ubtqiuous tears will have their say.

I wake up just outside the beloved city of Reno, now fearless. My heart is dehydrated. Yeah, “*my heart is dehydrated*” will

*be the new name of my sad emo boy band!* There is no more water supply left in my body. And then, tragedy hits: my walkman batteries are now officially dead. In combination with the neverending desert of Nevada, all existence might as well be dehydrated. Now, I have no choice but to listen to the obnoxious nazis who are overdominating the noise level.

"Argh, fuck this bus, when I get home to Sacramento, I'm gonna get me a beer!" one of them yells.

*I wanted to scream no really, fuck this bus! When I get to the Queer Mecca, I'm gonna get me some kinky sex that none of y'all can conceive of!* I always want to scream, Goodman! So why am I not doing that right now?

When the bus dumps us off at the Reno Greyhound Station, I have officially lost my mind! My heart! Nazis! The dead batteries! I have no place to scream! I hate Reno! Even worse, there is a police station inside the Greyhound station. Lovely. To my right, I notice that there is one of those uber-fit suspiciously-fag-like police officers in tight, tight spandex shorts trying to calm down a crying girl. The crying girl's hair is crimped! And her crying mother has a permed mullet! Reno!

"You have to go back home to the trailer park. You daddy loves you" the police officer says to the crying girl.

I look over to the police station. Inside, there looms and pouts a deadbeat father in a stained wife beater shirt. At this point, I don't even wanna know what is going on. Don't ask. Don't tell. Don't even.

Then, only because I like to look around a lot, I look over to the payphones where the deaf/midget Arab folks are trying to make a long distance phone call with quarters. All the drones are laughing at them. Cockishly, the skinheads go up to the

Arabs waving a phonecard in their face. "Uh huh, uh, what dumb asses for using quarters" some other drone says. Fuck these people. Have they ever left the country? If they were stuck in a shitty bus station in the middle of Turkey or Egypt trying to make a long distance phone call, they'd be majorly fucked. I don't hate all Americans, I hate dumb Americans. And I don't hate America, I hate the dumb people who live here.

I get back on the bus and pout/growl my way down the Sierra Nevada mountains, trying to tune out the skinheads. But then she comes: California. The gas immediately becomes insanely expensive. The palm trees kick in. The skinheads and other assorted drones get off in Sacramento. And then, at some point down the line, past Vallejo (aka "the armpit of america") and Richmond, I get off in Oakland. I smiled. I am the only white person. I can feel the cool polluted ocean breeze. Tomorrow I shall enter San Francisco. But for now, it's NO 110 degrees. Too Short blasts through the car speakers driving past me as I stand at the busstop in the wind. *My dick, my sack, your pussy, your back* the sexist-dork rapper shouts on the Oakland streets. I have never been so happy yet so much a scared 15 year old boy in my entire life. Something good has gotta happen next.

**In conclusion**...there are never enough wingnuts and the wingnuts that do exist, they are a plenty and they are meaty and they are interesting and there can never be enough stories written on them or religions or the desert or this country or other countries or even sexuality or food or the simple things like thrift store clothing and picking your nose. Sometimes when I am bored, waiting in lines or listening to stupid people talk who don't even listen to me when I talk back to them or say things like "I am really listening to you and I really feel what you are saying," I like to daydream things like *maybe someday I will open up a budget casino in las vegas where people win things like pink shower caps and old kraftwerk records, and I will be the queer pimp of las vegas.* But then I wake up outta the daydream, and realize that maybe I will just stay in the city and blush at cute girls and.....pretend I know shit 'bout utah and nevada, but I really don't, I was just tellin' a story y'all...

## ENVIRONMENT

Much of Nevada's rugged desert and mountain terrain is undisturbed by human development, especially in the sparsely populated north. However, hundreds of square miles of Nevada desert are contaminated by fallout from nuclear weapons testing, while other areas are polluted by tailings from the state's extensive mining industry.



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